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MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE PLAN

SYNOPSIS

ALBERTA EDUCATION

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MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE PLAN

SYNOPSIS

PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

This paper provides a brief overview of significant changes which are being made in the management and financing of education in Alberta. The information provided is intended (1) to help the reader understand the nature and extent of the changes and (2) to elicit feedback from all participants before proceeding to further stages of development and implementation.

The paper addresses the following areas: WHY the management and finance plan is being implemented, WHAT the plan consists of (its objectives and basic principles), HOW the plan will be implemented, and WHEN, or according to what time lines, the plan will be phased in.

RATIONALE FOR CHANGE

Alberta Education and school jurisdictions are responsible for ensuring that the highest possible quality of teaching, programs and schools is provided for the children in the province. This mandate encompasses students in Alberta's educational system from Early Childhood Services through Grade 12.

Recently, a number of significant events have affected all aspects of our lives. For example, the rates of economic growth and population increase have slowed down, and these trends are expected to continue for some time. As a result, attention has focused on the need for the public and private sectors to achieve increased efficiency and quality of output. The current emphasis in education on the evaluation of students, teachers, schools, school jurisdictions and programs is an illustration of this reality. Further, various tasks force reports have recommended specific initiatives primarily related to special needs of children. It is incumbent upon both government and school jurisdictions to respond to these recommendations.

Alberta's current educational system is fundamentally sound, and it has been effective in meeting educational needs. However, the management and direction of education must now adapt to changing times.

To respond more effectively to current and anticipated future conditions, Alberta Education is substantially modifying its approach to the management and delivery of education. Central to this change is a greater emphasis on a partnership relationship between the school jurisdictions and the province in the planning, delivery and assessment of educational programs. Consequently, the new funding structure will streamline the funding process and provide greater autonomy and flexibility to school jurisdictions in determining how provincial funds will be used to meet the needs of their students. At the same time, the focus will shift to greater accountability through requiring school jurisdictions to provide annual reports of their programs and services and through on-going monitoring and evaluation. The new evaluation policies will be a key feature of this approach.

OBJECTIVES OF THE MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE PLAN

The objectives of the Management and Finance Plan are:

(a) To increase local responsibility, autonomy, discretion and flexibility in the use of provincial funds for education.

(b) To increase the accountability of school jurisdictions to Alberta Education and to the electorate.

(c) To deregulate and simplify provincial administrative procedures.

(d) To improve the ability of school jurisdictions and Alberta Education to plan and to respond more quickly and effectively to the changing needs of students and parents.

(e) To permit school jurisdictions and Alberta Education to continue to respond within budget restraints to the special needs of pupils.

(f) To enable staff reduction within Alberta Education while continuing to improve the service provided to the public and the quality of education provided to students.

(g) To improve the ability of school jurisdictions and Alberta Education to plan and to assess the effectiveness of the use of public funds in achieving desired educational results.

UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES

The following principles establish the framework for developing the Management and Finance Plan.

(a) The Alberta Government and the school jurisdictions are responsible and accountable for education in the province.

(b) The Alberta Government provides leadership in establishing overall policies, priorities and direction to education in the province.

(c) Alberta Education is responsible for implementing educational policies, guidelines, procedures and standards, and for monitoring, evaluating and reporting educational results.

(d) School jurisdictions are accountable to Government for the planning and the end-results of education within provincially established policies. They also are responsible to the electorate for planning and programming, and for the achievement of educational results which meet the changing needs and expectations of students, parents and the community.

(e) School jurisdictions are responsible for the provision of educational programs and services to all resident students.

(f) The new budget structure maintains well established and sound principles of educational funding by providing foundation, equity, capital and special needs grants.

(g) Funding is, in the main, unconditional except for three general areas: capital, grants for transportation and specific grants for meeting the special needs of children.

(h) Special needs grants are based upon a resident pupil count, or on a per pupil served count where more appropriate.

(i) School jurisdictions and Alberta Education will use a management approach based upon policies and guidelines, and the on-going monitoring and evaluation of results.

(j) School jurisdictions and Alberta Education will use the results of their monitoring and evaluation processes to ensure that appropriate adjustments to the educational system are made.

Note: In 1984, school jurisdictions will receive at least the same level of funding as in 1983 with some enhancement for special needs of high priority. The 1984 School Foundation Program Fund (SFPF) per pupil grant will be maintained at the 1983 level and no board will suffer reduced revenue from grants solely because of the implementation of the plan. However, reductions could occur from such factors as reduced enrolment, reduction of the corporate assessment loss grant, and significant increases in equalized assessment leading to a decrease in the Supplementary Requisition Equalization Grant.

CHANGES IN THE PROCESS OF MANAGING THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

The changes to the management and financing of education are related to several activities already initiated by Alberta Education in cooperation with school jurisdictions. Examples are: (1) the proposed evaluation of students, teachers, schools, school jurisdictions and programs; (2) the Committee on Grants Simplification and Deregulation; (3) the Task Force on School Finance; and (4) the reorganization of Alberta Education, which will include placing more authority and responsibility closer to the focus of delivery.

Following are some of the highlights of the proposed changes in the allocation of responsibilities, the degree of emphasis on different management tools, and relationships with school jurisdictions (see Figure 1, page 5):

(a) There is increased emphasis on the use of policies, guidelines and procedures, and decreased emphasis on regulations.

(b) There is a shift away from a focus on educational inputs to a more balanced approach that incorporates inputs, processes and results.

(c) The Regional Offices of Alberta Education will assume more responsibility and authority for program delivery, monitoring and evaluation.

(d) The pre-payment cycle will be simplified so that it involves less paperwork.

(e) At the pre-payment stage, school jurisdictions will provide Alberta Education with information on policies, plans and programs for the subsequent year.

(f) Alberta Education and the school jurisdictions will monitor jointly the delivery of school programs on an on-going and continuous basis.

(g) School jurisdictions will submit annual reports to Alberta Education outlining their activities, programs and expenditures.

(h) The results of monitoring and evaluation will provide necessary information to make appropriate adjustments to school jurisdictions' activities and funding levels in the subsequent budget year.

Table 1 compares the present and proposed degree of emphasis placed on different management tools.

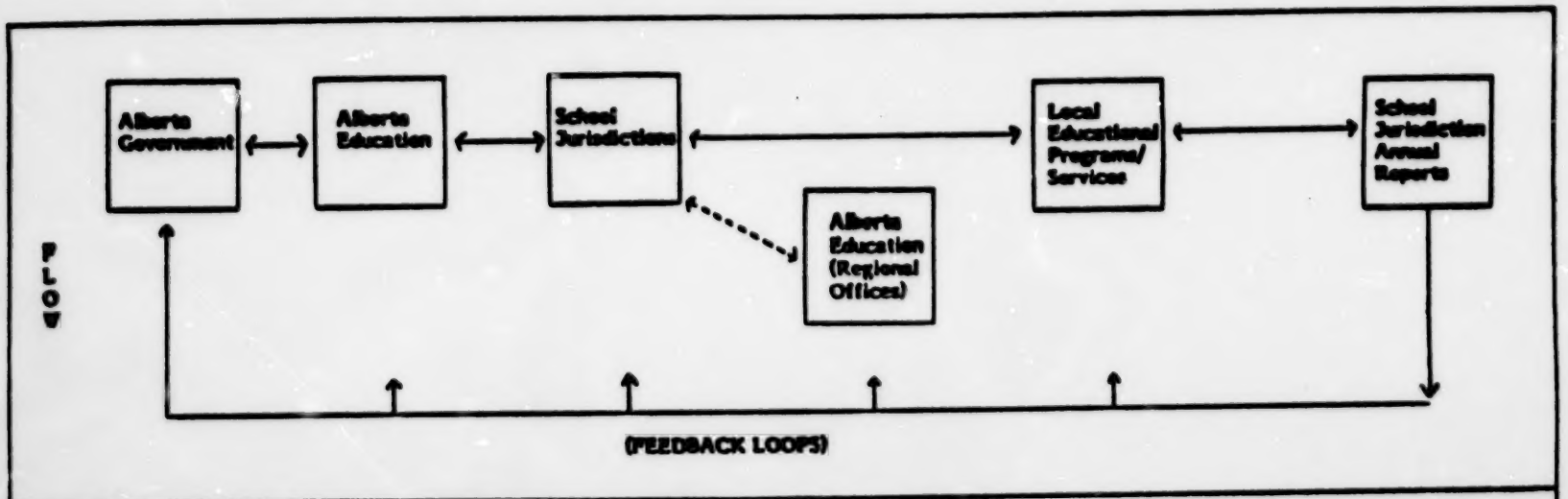
Table 1

Degree of Emphasis Placed on Management Tools

	Degree Of Emphasis	
Management Tools	**Present**	**Proposed**
Policies	Low	High
Guidelines	Low	High
Regulations	High	Low
Procedures	High	Medium
Forms	High	Low
Pre-Audit	High	Medium
Post-Audit	Low	Medium
Monitoring	Low	High
Evaluation/Standards Of Measurement	Low	High
Annual Reports of School Jurisdictions	Low	High

FIGURE I

OVERVIEW: MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE PLAN



ACTIVITIES						
	Government Establishes Educational Directions	Alberta Education Implements Government Directions Via Policies Guidelines, Standards, Funding, etc.	School Jurisdictions Develop Local Education Plans, Policies Programs, etc. within Provincial Policies and Funding Levels	Alberta Education (Regional Offices) Approves Grants Claims and Payments, Monitors and Evaluates Programs	School Jurisdictions Deliver Programs with Ongoing Monitoring by School Jurisdictions and Alberta Education	School Jurisdictions and Alberta Education Evaluate Programs and Make Adjustments As Required

CHANGES IN THE ALBERTA EDUCATION FUNDING STRUCTURE

Table 2 on the following page compares the present and the proposed funding structures.

TABLE 2: COMPARISON OF EXISTING FINANCE PLAN STRUCTURE TO PROPOSED STRUCTURE

(Format Only)

EXISTING PLAN	PROPOSED PLAN
A. School Foundation Program Fund	**A. School Foundation Program Fund**
Per Pupil Grants - Instruction Transportation and Boarding Grants Administration Grants Debt Retirement and School Building Quality Restoration	Per Pupil Grants - Instruction Transportation and Boarding Grants • Debt Retirement and School Building Quality Restoration•
B. Fiscal Equalization Grants	**B. Equity Grants**
Supplementary Requisition Equalization Grants Private School Opening Grants to School Boards Small Jurisdiction Grants Small School Assistance Grants Declining Enrolment Grants Location Allowance Incremental Grants to School Boards Corporate Assessment Grants Other Fiscal Equalization Grants	
C. Regular and Special Education Program Grants	**C. Special Need Grants**
1. Regular Education and Special Program Grants	**1. Pupil Needs**
Vocational Classes Extension Programs Research Official Language Grant Interdepartmental Community Schools English As a Second Language Other Special Program Grants Total Regular Education and Special Program Grants	Special Education: Per Pupil Grants Other: Sensory Multi-handicapped Grants Institutional Grants Vocational Education Official and Other Language Grants Extension Programs Early Childhood Services E.O.F.
2. Special Education Grants	**2. General Needs**
Teachers of Special Classes Instruction in Schools for Retarded Children Special Education Program Unit Grants Rehabilitation Aides Sensory Multihandicapped Other Special Education Grants	Interdepartmental Community Schools Educational Research Films for Libraries Inservice Education
D. Other Sub-Programs	**D. Other Service Programs**
Grants to Private Schools Grants to Private Schools	Teachers' Pensions Grants to Private Schools
Early Childhood Services Grants to Early Childhood Programs	
Educational Opportunity Fund Educational Opportunity Fund Grants	
Special Assistance to School Boards Teachers' Pensions Textbooks and Readers Films for Libraries Computer Technology Administration	
Learning Disabilities Fund Learning Disability Fund Grants	• (To be displayed separately in 1984-85 Budget).

USE OF ADDITIONAL FUNDS FOR 1984

The 1984 provincial funding plan provides for a 2% increase in grants to local school jurisdictions over the 1983 level on a province wide basis. These funds have been allocated to areas of high priority.

The areas of priority fall into two categories: increased equity and special needs grants. Additionally, changes in the methods of funding are contemplated.

1. Increased Equity

Combine a number of different types of equalization and compensatory grants in a block equity grant. Includes some changes in the rural transportation grant.

2. Special Needs

A. Pupil Needs:

Special Education

Change from a teacher and program funding base to a resident pupil base but retain (on a more limited basis) the present institutional and sensory multi-handicapped funding. Includes utilization of funds for the gifted and talented.

Extension Programs

Change from a credit enrolment unit to a per pupil served count.

Vocational Education

Change from a credit enrolment unit to a per pupil served count.

Official Language and Other Language Grants

Change from teacher-based or time-based grants to a per pupil served count.

B. General Needs

Inservice Education

Provide incentives for teacher inservice in areas of priority.

IMPLEMENTATION TIME LINES

The management and finance plan will be implemented in phases. Following are tentative time lines for implementation of the plan. Further information will be distributed at a later date.

	Phases	Target Dates
A.	Development and consultation with school jurisdictions	January to March, 1984
B.	1984/85 provincial budget approved; funds distributed as per present programs	March, 1984
C.	Implementation of management and finance plan Where appropriate, funds distributed as per management and finance plan Continue consultation with school jurisdictions	September, 1984
D.	School jurisdictions provide first annual report as per management and finance plan requirements Continue consultation with school jurisdictions	June/July, 1985
E.	Joint monitoring and evaluation continues as per plan	December, 1985

POOR

QUALITY

ORIGINAL